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9 September 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: CIA Materials in the White House and in
Presidential Libraries

1. Here is a summary of a 90-minute conversation I had on 5 September with Mr. Arthur McCafferty, the staff officer of the National Security Council who is responsible for maintaining the vault which contains all material in the White House on foreign affairs, national security, and intelligence.

2. Everything in the vault is scheduled to be shipped to Austin for inclusion in the special classified section of the Johnson Library. This practice was followed in assembling the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy Libraries. Even though CIA made no specific contributions to either the Truman or Eisenhower Library as such, Mr. McCafferty said "you would be absolutely astounded to know how much CIA material is in them. I think you can take it for granted that every goddam piece of paper ever sent to Mr. Eisenhower by CIA is in the Eisenhower Library. There are probably two full safes of material in the Kennedy Library devoted to the missile crisis, and this certainly includes material provided by CIA."

3. At 5 o'clock on the afternoon of the assassination in 1963, the roadway outside the entrance to the West Wing was piled high with boxes from the vault to be shipped to the Kennedy Library. This will be true again on 19 January 1969. (And it raises the question whether CIA should try to obtain permission to inspect and catalogue the CIA materials already in the various presidential libraries. The White House filing system by which documents are filed according to general subject only, and not by origin, would make this an exceedingly large task.) The decision as to what papers in the foreign and security fields will be made available to the next administration is to be made by Walt Rostow and McCafferty implied that this is a matter of pressing unfinished business.

4. At the same time McCafferty emphasized that the Government's laws and regulations applying to the handling of classified material are binding on the Presidential Library and will continue to be until such material is specifically declassified, presumably by the originating Agency. In the case of the Kennedy Library, McCafferty pointed out that even the White House staff has difficulty in getting access to material, and that the archivist in charge of the Kennedy Library is himself unable to go into certain safes. (He implied CIA might

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have considerable difficulty in gaining access to the sensitive parts of the Kennedy collection.) Meanwhile the current practice is for most White House files to be kept in a central registry, except for those under the charge of Mr. McCafferty. The central registry includes only one type of material of concern to CIA, so far as Mr. McCafferty is aware. This is material on CIA's congressional liaison: for example, the monthly letter and a weekly synopsis of events relating to congressional liaison which CIA used to provide.

5. As for McCafferty's vault, which he showed me, it is a room about 8 x 15 feet which contains four banks of open shelves from the floor almost to the ceiling, all stuffed full, with boxes or other material on top. All this material has every type of classification through SI. Material of higher classification is kept in safes requiring special access and one safe is reserved for material considered extremely sensitive. The only material systematically broken down within a large subject is that dealing with Vietnam. The manner in which material on Vietnam is filed is illustrated by two documents he gave me and which are attached. These files contain, for example, all the assessment reports of the effects of bombing of North Vietnam which were prepared either by OER or by OER and DIA and sent to the White House. As McCafferty flipped through one file for me, the one on attitudes of the North Vietnamese leadership, I noticed papers produced by ONE and OCI, a number of CS reports from FE Division, and a memorandum signed by [REDACTED], along with other materials from DOD and State produced both here and abroad. It looked as if ^{25X1A} the files on Vietnam made up about one quarter of the total; McCafferty said that almost everything sent to the White House on Vietnam has been saved with the exception of picture boards and other products of photo reconnaissance.

6. McCafferty believes that only two of the continuing serial products of CIA are present in their entirety: the President's Daily Brief and the Special Daily Report on Vietnam. But the OCI situation reports on past crises are also present; McCafferty showed me two long shelves full of material on the Dominican Republic which he said included the sitreps.* The criterion for preserving these three types of material is that they have been personally seen by the President. This same criterion dictates preservation - and shipment to Austin - of all memoranda from CIA to the President - e.g. the DCI's of 27 March 1967 on the report of the Katzenbach Committee.

* Incidentally, I noticed one folder in the Dominican Republic file labeled with the name of a public opinion poll. Another, which serves to remind us that much of the most sensitive material did not come from the CIA, is labeled "BENNETT: 'HELP!' "

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7. Contrary to the impression given to the Office of Security, the file of National Intelligence Estimates and Special National Intelligence Estimates is not complete: each estimate which has been superseded by a later one is usually destroyed. Other products of ONE are present only if they have been sent to the President personally or are on a subject of particular importance at the moment. I saw several which had buckslips from the DCI to the President.

8. The Current Intelligence Bulletin is generally kept for three months and then returned to CIA.

9. The preservation of White House copies of blue-stripe reports has been very selective. McCafferty estimates that 75% are destroyed and of the remainder only a very small number have been shown to the President. One he remembered, for example, dealt with the speech by Brezhnev on the world situation last Spring. Since the report was long it was necessary to provide a summary, and McCafferty obtained this from CIA. (Incidentally, when he selects such a report for the President to see, he usually asks OCI for a quick analysis of its significance.) We discussed the question of source data in these reports, since whether a given report will be shown to the President depends to a considerable degree on the reliability and importance of the source. Thus some of the blue-stripe reports contain highly sensitive information on the source in the accompanying summary. I told McCafferty that these summaries must therefore be among the most sensitive material in the White House, especially when they reveal or suggest a CIA penetration of a friendly foreign government or an unusual liaison relationship. I asked if it would be possible to identify which blue-stripe reports are still in the vault and then if it would be possible to retrieve those of unusual sensitivity for maintenance in CIA custody. McCafferty said he would be willing to check for the presence of individual reports if we provided the date of the report, the date of transmittal, the title, and the country or area. As for retrieving them, he said that any request would have to be made by the DCI to the President.

10. The practice of destroying outdated NIEs and returning outdated CIBs represents almost the only effort of the White House staff to purge the files of old material. McCafferty and his assistant emphasized that they have neither the manpower nor the time to apply any criterion of selectivity to documents in general once they have been put in the vault. The breakdown of Vietnam files into categories and sub-categories, only recently reorganized, is a much more systematic approach than it has been possible to apply to other materials in the vault. Thus what is preserved for posterity reflects to a considerable degree the pressure of workload and lack of opportunity to purge rather than a carefully conceived program of selection for historical purposes.

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11. The quantity of White House material from photo reconnaissance is negligible. McCafferty believes there are no picture boards, and said readout of overhead photography will be present only if it has been transmitted by the DCI or is included in a special report to the President. The quantity of this type of material is exceedingly limited.

12. Of FBIS material the reports on worldwide reactions to such events as the Glassboro meeting and the Russell "Tribunal" are in the White House, but propaganda analyses are not and neither are the daily reports of FBIS.

13. Material in the White House which came from the National Intelligence Surveys consists of a few sections on Vietnam, perhaps some on the Dominican Republic, and maybe half a dozen other isolated sections.

14. There is practically nothing in the White House from the Foreign Documents Division.

15. Special Briefings provided by CIA are in the White House only if they were provided in written form. Hearings of CIA before committees of Congress are included only if the DCI provided them personally to the President.

16. The following is the situation as McCafferty understands it with respect to material bearing on CIA activities from sources outside the Agency:

a. Papers produced by or for the [REDACTED] are not 25X1A
Walt Rostow's file, and in principle are not considered to be part of the White House collection. They have been returned to [REDACTED] file after use, and thus even those which are still in the White House can be considered as in the present or eventual custody of CIA. This would be true of the [REDACTED] Report, for example. 25X1A

25X1A b. Minutes and other documents of the U.S. Intelligence Board are not formally received by the White House. NSC Liaison may send them to [REDACTED] "who reads them and throws them away". McCafferty can think of no USIB papers in his files.

c. There are no PFIAB papers in the White House files, and McCafferty doubts that any PFIAB papers will be provided to the Austin Library. (We must check this with General Taylor or Pat Coyne.) Special papers such as the reports of the Knox and Eaton Panels went from PFIAB to the White House but were returned to PFIAB.

d. National Security Action Memoranda are published by the White House and will go to Austin.

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e. McCafferty estimates that 98% of the papers produced by the Senior Interdepartmental Group are in the vault, but very few of those produced by the Interdepartmental Regional Groups. There is, of course, IRG material in the files of the individual staff officers in the White House who are members of an IRG. It is not certain whether their files will go to Austin, but the answer is probably yes.

f. It is also not certain whether the files of Dr. Hornig will go to Austin but again the answer is probably yes. This remains to be checked, along with the question of what materials from the DD/S&T may be provided the Library by him or other donors.

g. McCafferty thinks that the entire files of the Warren Commission are in the Kennedy Library, and that nothing affecting the Warren Commission is now in the White House except perhaps in those personal files of McGeorge Bundy which date from the Johnson Administration.


17. From all this it is clear that CIA has already made, willy nilly, a voluminous and important contribution to the Johnson Library. In the next few days I shall circulate some observations on what we can most usefully do to round it out. We ought also to be thinking of a systematic approach to this problem in the next and future administrations, since Presidential Libraries containing everything in the White House vault are clearly here to stay.


Coordinator,
Johnson Library Project

Attachments: 2 Memos on Vietnam Files

Distribution:

DCI
Ex. Dir.-Compt.
DDP
DDI
DD/S&T
DDS
D/DCI/NIPE
OGC
OLC
D/ONE
D/Sec.
CA Staff
Historical Staff
(Others to be added)



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12 September 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Handling of Classified Material in Presidential Libraries

1. Here is what came out of a long conversation on 11 September 1968 with Mr. Evans Walker, the officer in charge of Presidential Libraries in the National Archives and Records Service. It adds up to an assurance that classified material in Presidential Libraries will not become available to the public for many years - "we are thinking in terms of 75 to 100 years," said Walker - and that CIA will remain master of the disposition and use of its own donations to the National Archives, of which the Presidential Libraries are a part.

2. The Archivist of the United States will shortly address a letter to the DCI to assure him that access to CIA papers in these collections will be kept under strict control. Meanwhile I have Mr. Walker's assurance that CIA's wishes with respect to retention of material in CIA custody for eventual transfer to Presidential Libraries will be respected.

3. Here briefly is the status of four Presidential Libraries already in being:

a. Roosevelt. The collection at Hyde Park contains something like 25 to 30 million pages. It is still being screened. Of one large body of wartime maps, for example, 90% are still sealed and unscreened, and no one has any idea when they will become accessible to the public except that it will be "long years in the future." Meanwhile only the Director of the Library and probably one assistant will have access to such materials.

b. Truman. The Library at Independence has a security vault intended to hold all classified materials. The problem here, however, is that Mr. Truman has kept many of the most important documents in his own personal possession. Until recently he occupied an office in the Truman Library; I gathered that much of his sensitive material is in this office, but it has not yet been integrated into the Library proper. The known collection contains something like 18 to 20 million pages, and there is no telling when screening will be completed.

c. Eisenhower. The Library at Abilene similarly holds some 18 to 20 million pages of documents, and sensitive materials are stored separately in a security vault. These materials were turned over to Archives about a year ago and screening began only then. It too will take many years to complete.

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d. Kennedy. The entire Kennedy collection is in dead storage, and it will not even begin to be screened until the new building is finished. Most papers are already stored near Cambridge, but documents bearing on national security and foreign affairs have been retained in the National Archives Building in Washington in case any of them is needed by the Johnson Administration - i.e., asked for by Bromley Smith. Walker believes that Smith has asked for documents only five times at most during the past five years.

(e. Johnson. All Walker could say about the size of the Library at Austin is that it will be "fantastic." The vault-space needed for sensitive material in each Library has been growing larger and larger.)

4. Presidential Donations:

"About 99%" of the material in the Libraries so far has come from the personal collections of the Presidents. It is conveyed to the Library by an instrument of gift which is so complicated that it takes several months to write. The one signed by the Kennedy family provided for access to the documents by the Johnson Administration as necessary, but it omitted to mention access by future administrations, and this problem remains to be resolved. In general the instrument sets overall policy for future handling, including rules governing the date and manner of making presidential papers available to the public.

5. Other Donations:

The archivists solicit personal papers from any person closely associated with a President. Some are still coming in for addition to the Hoover Library. Personal papers contain a great hodgepodge of materials, and we must expect that they will include some from CIA. Walker had noted a copy of a Current Intelligence Bulletin in one recent personal contribution, and supposes that there must be CIA papers in others. He had recently had occasion to go through an attic full of documents which had gathered dust since 1945. The donor's instrument of gift had placed no restrictions on the use of his donation, but a quick look showed that it contained so many sensitive State Department documents that the archivists declared the whole collection off limits to the public.

6. Contributions by agencies and departments are governed by the stipulations of the donors. A number of agencies stipulated that their material in the Kennedy Library was not to be made public for 75 years. The Atomic Energy Commission has under way a massive program for earmarking materials for the Johnson Library, but most of it will not even

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leave AEC custody for 25 years. Walker is of the impression that some 40 to 50 reels of microfilm are being maintained in CIA custody for eventual inclusion in the Kennedy Library. Whatever criteria we adopt for keeping materials in CIA custody for eventual inclusion in the Johnson Library will be satisfactory to the archivists.

6. Screening:

The process by which these masses of paper are brought into some order is roughly as follows:

a. Basic policy is laid down in the original instrument of gift signed by the President or any other donor.

b. The Presidential instrument usually provides for a committee to oversee the screening of the collections; it usually includes representatives of the National Archives, close associates of the President, and maybe the President's family lawyer. It establishes the priorities for screening, and even this first step may take several years.

c. Then the professional staff of the National Archives, armed with all necessary clearances, goes through the collection document by document, looking at every page. Three types of material are separated out for special handling: those which deal with national security or may be prejudicial to relations with other governments or may reflect on persons still alive. Each originating agency is asked for permission to screen its documents. The screening committee meets occasionally to review the work of the professional staff.

d. The Archives people do not tamper in any way with the system of filing bequeathed by the White House or any other donor.

7. There is at present no regulation specifically governing the handling of and access to classified documents in Presidential Libraries, but Walker agreed that it would be useful to create one and that it would be appropriate for CIA to participate in this action. Meanwhile Executive Order No. 10501 applies. Walker kept pointing out that it is the policy of Archives to bend over backwards in safeguarding sensitive materials, and it was he who proposed that the Archivist write a letter reassuring the DCI.

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8. I suggested that one of our worries on this point was that a President, instead of writing a book on his administration involving security problems with which he himself was familiar, might assign such a task to a trusted associate who would not understand those problems. Walker acknowledged that this might be a real difficulty. But short of a President's personal intervention in the handling of the papers of his own administration, this danger is unlikely to arise. I asked whether there was any chance that a trusted scholar with the right security clearances might be given early access to papers on his undertaking not to quote from them. Walker replied that so far as the Archives were concerned, there is a very firm policy not to allow any individual to have access to Presidential papers ahead of the public. "If Arthur Schlesinger, for example, asked to use the Kennedy Library for research ahead of other scholars, he would be turned down cold."

9. The Physical Problem:

In general the documents of government agencies are being microfilmed by the Archives on the agencies' own premises, with portable table-top cameras dating from World War II. The Archives hope that the 35 mm microfilm can eventually be converted into Xerox copies. If CIA is able to do its own microfilming so much the better. There will be no problem in handling material which is microfilmed in batches of 5 to 20 thousand pages at a time, but the Archives urged that the reels be properly identified; their problems would be reduced if the material were properly indexed. Aperture cards would be satisfactory, and, to the extent we could provide our own Xerox copies, we would reduce the later workload on Archives.

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Distribution:

DCI
Ex. Dir.-Compt.
DDP
DDI
DD/S&T
DDS
D/DCI/NIPE
OGC
OLC
D/ONE
D/S
CA Staff
Historical Staff
(Others to be added)

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Stan
Thought you might be
interested in these memos
I found in my files

Retain/Destroy



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FORM 101 USE PREVIOUS
5-75 EDITIONS